

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated March 05, 2009 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1 and 14 are hereby amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 5, 7-13, and 15-18 are hereby canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Accordingly, claims 1-4, 6, and 14 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-13 and 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over European Patent Office 0 793 943 (hereinafter “EPO ‘940”) in view of U. S. Patent No. 7,367,134 to Osvatic et al. (hereinafter “Osvatic”), U. S. Patent No. 6,349,731 to Schaaf et al. (hereinafter “Schaaf”) or Japan 10-306933 (hereinafter “Japan ‘933”) and Japan 11-346981 (hereinafter “Japan ‘981”). *Office Action* at p. 2, ¶ 2. The rejection of claim 5, 7-13, and 16-18 are moot as these claims are canceled. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of the remaining claims and requests reconsideration.

Independent claim 1 is allowable over *EPO ‘940*, *Osvatic*, *Schaaf*, *Japan ‘933*, and *Japan ‘981*, in that claim 1 recites a combination of elements including, for example, “a blower cover assembly comprising: a circular attaching cap inserted in a hole formed on the door liner; a guide sleeve extending frontward from the attaching cap and having a diameter less than a diameter of the attaching cap; ... a dropping hole formed on a lower portion of the guide sleeve for dropping the washing water to the tub.”

The Office purports that *Osvatic* cures the deficiencies of *EPO ‘940* and discloses a circular attaching cap in Fig. 4 of *Osvatic*. *Office Action* at p. 2, ¶ 2:16-18. *Osvatic*’s vent cap 40, however, is not inserted in the door liner. The vent cap 40 of *Osvatic* is coupled to outer surface of the vent plate 48 and the vent seat ring 50, which are provided at the end portion of vent housing 24. *Osvatic* at FIG. 2 and col. 3:55-59. Also, the vent plate 48 and the vent seat ring 50 of *Osvatic* are not provided at the door liner. In contrast, the circular attaching cap of the embodiments of the present invention is inserted into a hole formed on the door liner. Therefore,

it is unreasonable to construe the vent cap 40 of *Osvatic* as the circular attaching cap, as recited by independent claim 1.

Next, the Office purports that *Japan '933*, *Osvatic*, and *Schaaf*, cure the deficiencies of *EPO '940*, as each purportedly disclose that a diameter of the guide sleeve is less than that of the attaching cap. *Office Action* at p. 4. *Japan '933*, however, discloses a diameter of the cover part 2 is larger than that of the insert part 1. *Japan '933* at Fig. 1 and ¶10. Further, assuming that the vent cap 40 of *Osvatic* corresponds to the circular attaching cap of the present invention, *Osvatic* does not include a guide sleeve extended frontward from the vent cap 40. Moreover, *Schaaf* only discloses flange 50 extended backward from the louvered cap 48. There is no element corresponding to the guide sleeve of the present invention in *Schaaf*. Thus, *Japan '933*, *Osvatic*, and *Schaaf* do not teach that the guide sleeve has a diameter less than that of the attaching cap, as recited by claim 1.

Next, the Office purports that *Japan '981* cures the deficiencies of *EPO '940* and discloses a cover comprising a drain hole as claimed. *Office Action* at p. 3, 13-14. Applicant respectfully disagrees and notes that claim 1 recites, “a dropping hole formed on a lower portion of the guide sleeve for dropping the washing water to the tub,” which is extended frontward from the circular attaching cap. Furthermore, the dropping hole of the embodiments of the present invention is provided outside the door, and is for dropping or draining the washing water to the tub. *Japan '981*, however, discloses the trap 73 provided inside the door 2. Also, *Japan '981* describes that the washing water is only stored in the trap 73. *Japan '981* at Fig. 4 and paragraph 29. Thus, *Japan '981* fails to teach the dropping hole of the present invention.

Claims 14 and 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the applied prior art as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Japan 07-163507 (hereinafter *Japan '507*). *Office Action* at p. 4, ¶ 3. The rejection of claim 15 is moot as this claim is canceled. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of the remaining claims and requests reconsideration.

As stated above, *EPO '940*, *Osvatic*, *Schaaf*, *Japan '933*, and *Japan '981* fail to teach the limitations of independent claim 1, from which claim 14 depends. *Japan '507* fails to cure the deficiencies of *EPO '940*, *Osvatic*, *Schaaf*, *Japan '933*, and *Japan '981* stated above. Thus, claim 14 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependency from independent claim 1.

CONCLUSION

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, and/or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objection and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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Respectfully submitted,

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